

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, the world has watched over recent months as the brutal dictatorship in Burma has arrested and killed Buddhist monks and democracy activists and as it continues to attack, rape and kill ethnic minorities. The House has just passed an excellent bill imposing further sanctions on Burma, the JADE Act.

Amazingly, in the Senate, leading Democrats don't want the House version of the bill. Instead, they want to allow for cash money to go to the ruling regime for humanitarian purposes. Hello? Aid that goes through the regime does not get to the people of Burma. The rulers simply enrich themselves with any moneys coming into the country.

In addition, certain Senators wish to give the Treasury Department an opening one could drive a Mack truck through so that Treasury could make any regulation it likes regarding U.S. money going into Burma. I hope those Senators will read the reports and look at the photos from Burma. The democracy activists, monks and ethnic minorities are the ones who should get our support, not the brutal military regime.

RECOGNIZING ATHLETIC DIRECTOR AND FORMER COACH FRANK BROYLES ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS

(Mr. ROSS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, as he prepares for retirement at the end of this year, it is impossible to think about Razorback athletics and imagine what it would be like without Coach Frank Broyles. His achievements on the field are numerous and distinctive. However, it is his battle off the field that inspires me even more. In 1999, Coach Broyles' wife was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and, needless to say, this battle changed his family forever. Studying defenses on the football field for decades prepared Coach Broyles as he looked for a way to attack perhaps his greatest challenge yet.

After years of caring for his wife and receiving calls and letters from supporters, he sat down and compiled his most impressive playbook ever: "The Coach Broyles' Playbook for Alzheimer's Caregivers: A Practical Tip Guide." His playbook has helped countless families caring for loved ones with Alzheimer's, letting them know that their fight with this disease is not something they must face alone. In 2004, Coach Broyles' wife, Barbara Broyles, succumbed to the disease, which still has no cure.

His accomplishments in college football will never be forgotten, but the hope and faith he has given to families across this Nation coping with Alz-

heimer's will leave a lasting impact on our society for generations to come.

EARMARKS FOR REELECTION CAMPAIGNS

(Mr. FLAKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FLAKE. Madam Speaker, one of my astute colleagues recently said, "One of the toughest parts of being a Member of Congress is remembering what we are supposed to be outraged about." I thought about this yesterday when I heard the report that surprise, surprise, earmarks were being used to help Members get reelected. The reason that is treated with kind of a ho-hum is because, as it turns out, that is one of the more noble explanations as to why earmarks are used.

With the reporting that is going on about earmarks being tied to campaign contributions, or chairmen, or people in leadership positions getting tens of millions of dollars in earmarks for favored companies or organizations in their district, it seems that we have simply gone too far when we don't recognize this as a problem.

I would call on my colleagues in the new year to have a moratorium on earmarks. Let's put a brake on this process until we can put a process in place to adequately vet these. There is no noble purpose for the contemporary practice of earmarking. Try as we might, we aren't coming up with one.

THE DEMOCRATIC YEAR IN REVIEW

(Ms. SCHWARTZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SCHWARTZ. The first year of the new Democratic majority is coming to a close, and we have already set our Nation in a new direction. We increased the minimum wage, improving the lives of millions of American workers. We increased fuel efficiency standards and set a new path for energy independence that will create new jobs and enhance our economic competitiveness. We enacted the largest college financial aid expansion since 1944, bringing the American Dream within the reach of millions of children in our country. And we are about to pass the largest increase in veterans health care in American history in honor of the service and commitment of all of our veterans.

We accomplished all of this in spite of the stubborn resistance of Republican obstructionists who have tried to undermine our efforts at every opportunity. We did this despite the President's refusal to compromise.

This year is coming to a close, but our commitment to change will continue. Hard-working American families can be assured that when we return in January, the Democratic majority will continue to fight for their and our priorities.

Best wishes for a happy, healthy, secure and hopeful new year to all Americans. God bless our great Nation.

THE OKLAHOMA STANDARD

(Ms. FALLIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FALLIN. Madam Speaker, this past week the State of Oklahoma experienced a severe ice storm that left over 600,000 homes and businesses without power or heat. As you can imagine, Oklahomans have had a very challenging time. Today, I want to thank the people of Oklahoma for helping each other and commend the various generous volunteers and organizations that came to their aid.

Since the disaster of the Murrah Federal Building in 1995, the people of my great State are said to have created what is known as "the Oklahoma standard," rallying to help each other in times of need, and certainly this past week, to week and a half, has been no exception.

I want to personally thank Governor Henry and President Bush for working together to ensure that the proper Federal aid disaster relief has come to Oklahoma. And I would also like to commend the State Office of Emergency Management, FEMA representatives and the State Corporation Commission who kept us informed and on track as power loss was reported and power was restored.

I especially want to commend the utility crews who worked tirelessly in their efforts to restore power. I want to thank the hundreds of utility workers from other States who came to help. Thank you for leaving your homes and families during this holiday season.

Madam Speaker, there are so many organizations to thank who went above and beyond to help the State of Oklahoma, churches, synagogues and charities. The Southern Baptist Convention, United Way of Central Oklahoma, the Salvation Army and the Red Cross, to name just a few, worked to provide food, shelter and other supplies, and all went beyond their usual call of duty to clear the road to recovery.

Thank you so much, and may God bless you.

MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE REFORM

(Mr. BRALEY of Iowa asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my serious concerns that inadequate oversight, deficient procedures, and ethical lapses at the Department of Interior's Minerals Management Service (MMS) are costing the Federal Government millions of dollars each year.

The MMS is responsible for negotiating, implementing and overseeing all

Federal leases for resources removed by private companies from public lands, and it is supposed to be a guardian of our Nation's precious public resources.

Unfortunately, evidence suggests that the cozy relationships between MMS officials and oil and gas companies have allowed these companies to underreport the resources they remove from Federal lands and underpay the royalties they owe to the Federal Government. Evidence that MMS has failed to detect and pursue these violations by oil and gas companies is especially troubling as gas prices continue to rise, corporations make record profits, and average Americans are struggling to fill their gas tanks and make ends meet.

Most hard-working, taxpaying Americans would be outraged to know that these companies are cheating the Government out of these royalties which are a critical source of revenue for the U.S. Treasury and which would allow us to invest in other priorities.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE EXTRAORDINARY SERVICE OF JANIE GALMON

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, it is a great honor, we all know, to represent the American people here in the people's House. We all work long hours. We spend a great deal of time here. And I would like to, at this moment, mark the extraordinary service of a woman who has chosen to retire after nearly 50 years of working here in the Capitol. I am referring, of course, to the very famous Janie Galmon.

My colleagues may not know her last name, but they are very familiar with Janie's fried chicken, which has been prepared for us on Wednesdays on a regular basis. She is someone who was working in this Capitol when President Kennedy was assassinated, and she regularly has shared with us stories about that.

She always showed up to work at 5 a.m. regardless of how late we were in the night before. We could be here, and she can be working downstairs mid-night, 1 o'clock, but she was always back here coming in with our friend, Sally, at 5 o'clock in the morning.

She has provided extraordinary service and sustenance to so many of us. Janie, after a half century, has chosen to retire. I want to wish her congratulations, a very happy retirement, and a very, very merry Christmas.

CARING FOR OUR NATION'S VETERANS

(Mr. HALL of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HALL of New York. Madam Speaker, first let me wish a happy and

safe holiday to all our men and women in uniform who are serving here and abroad.

After watching the Department of Veterans Affairs face a \$1 billion shortfall during a time of war, I came into this Congress convinced that if we had the money to fight a war, we must have the money to treat the warrior.

One of the first votes that this Congress took was to increase funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs. And one of our last votes of the year will be to provide \$6.7 billion in new funding to the Department to ensure that our Nation's veterans get the care they have earned.

The way the government spends its money is a true indication of its priorities. With this appropriations bill, our new Congress has shown that America's veterans are a top priority.

CONGRATULATING MAYOR CECIL PRUETT

(Mr. PRICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and to congratulate Mayor Cecil Pruett of Canton, Georgia, on a tremendous career and a well-deserved retirement. A true public servant and outstanding leader, Mayor Pruett will be retiring this month after 12 years as mayor of the City of Canton in Cherokee County, Georgia.

Mayor Pruett has always strived to better his community, and his broad experience has served his constituents well. The mayor was formerly the president of the Georgia Municipal Association, president of the Cherokee County Chamber of Commerce, and a member of the Atlanta Regional Executive Committee.

An educator, he remains active in leadership posts at Reinhardt College, Georgia Baptist Children's Home, North Georgia Regional Development Center, and his own church where he serves as a deacon.

Mayor Pruett oversaw substantial economic growth in Canton over his 12 years, but he has always worked to preserve the small town charm that is a hallmark of Cherokee County. A southern gentleman in every way, Mayor Pruett and his honest leadership will be sincerely missed. We wish Cecil and his wife, Myrna, a happy and a healthy retirement.

DEMOCRATIC ACHIEVEMENTS OVER THE LAST YEAR

(Mr. HODES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HODES. Madam Speaker, as we prepare to complete this first year of the new Democratic Congress, I would like to take a moment to reflect on some of the major accomplishments that we have achieved on behalf of the

American people. As a member of the majority makers, the historic class of 2006, we have helped to restore integrity, idealism and imagination to the people's House. We increased the minimum wage for the first time in a decade and fully implemented the 9/11 Commission recommendations to better protect our Nation.

Since then, we have worked to ease the financial burdens that middle-class families face, passing the most sweeping college affordability package in more than 60 years, and yesterday, we approved an historic energy bill to declare our energy independence and help us address global warming, saving Americans anywhere from \$700 to \$1,000 a year in gas prices.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to stand with fellow Democrats for an American agenda, real security, healthy families, a thriving economy, with opportunity for all, not just a few at the top, and a sustainable future for our planet. I look forward to 2008.

SCHIP

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, it is so interesting to look at today's Whipping Post and see the myriad and vast range of the issues that are coming before us. And many of these are issues that should have been addressed months ago.

One of those that we are going to address first off this morning will be S. 2499. This is an issue that is going to deal with Medicare, Medicaid and SCHIP, the State Children's Health Insurance Program. This should have been handled months ago. It has been running under a continuing resolution.

Madam Speaker, I am so pleased that the congressional leadership has decided to finally take the politics out of this and to support SCHIP as it was currently put in place in 1997 by a Republican Congress and to keep the focus on children of the working poor who need access to health care.

I support this bill, and I encourage my colleagues to do likewise and to continue to support SCHIP as it was originally put in place in 1997 by a Republican Congress.

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PRESIDENT BUSH IS OUT OF TOUCH WHEN HE SAYS THE ECONOMY IS STRONG

(Mr. ELLISON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ELLISON. Madam Speaker, earlier this week President Bush showed us that his view of the economy does not match that of the overwhelming majority of Americans. That is when he tried to convince the Nation that the economy was strong for everyone.